



# Fluoride and Your Child's Oral Health

An effective way to protect teeth and prevent cavities

A recent study by Delta Dental shows that **64 percent of higher-risk children age 18 or younger did not receive two or more fluoride treatments per year.**<sup>1</sup> These figures are particularly striking when you realize that most dental plans cover preventive care, like fluoride treatments, at 100 percent of the cost. Read on to learn more about this simple and effective preventive measure.

## What is fluoride?



Fluoride is a mineral that helps teeth become more resistant to decay (cavities). Fluoride is commonly found in drinking water and toothpaste. There are also prescription-strength fluoride treatments which are given in the dental office or prescribed for home use. Fluoride treatments are quick and painless. They are usually done by painting a fluoride solution on the tooth surfaces or by holding a mouthguard filled with a fluoride foam or gel in the mouth for a short time.

## Who needs fluoride?



Everyone can benefit from fluoride! For most children and adults, daily exposure through fluoridated drinking water and twice-daily brushing with fluoride toothpaste is enough for a lifetime of cavity prevention. For those who are at higher risk for tooth decay, additional fluoride can help protect against future decay. Although overall oral health risk is a combination of genetics, personal habits and diet, a history of decay is a good predictor of future risk of decay. Therefore, a child is considered to be at higher risk if he or she has had a cavity filled in the past three years.



## Are fluoride treatments covered by my dental plan?

The good news is most of Delta Dental's benefit plans cover preventive care, like regular exams, cleanings, fluoride treatments and sealants, at up to 100 percent. In fact, we recommend most employers cover two fluoride treatments per year at 100 percent.

Talk with your dentist about whether your child is at higher risk for tooth decay and could benefit from fluoride treatments. To check your dental plan's coverage, log in at [deltadental.com](http://deltadental.com) to view your benefits and eligibility.